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32 CFR Ch. VI (7–1–16 Edition)

§ 776.9 Rules Counsel.

Appointed by JAG to act as special assistants for the administration of subpart B of this part, the Rules Counsel derive authority from JAG and, as detailed in this part, have “by direction” authority. The Rules Counsel shall cause opinions issued by the Professional Responsibility Committee of general interest to the DoN legal community to be published in summarized, non-personal form in suitable publications. Unless another officer is appointed by JAG to act in individual cases, the following officers shall act as Rules Counsel:

(a) The SJA to CMC, for cases involving Marine Corps judge advocates, or civil service and contracted civilian attorneys who perform legal services under his cognizance;

(b) Assistant Judge Advocate General, Chief Judge, DoN (AJAG–CJ) for cases involving Navy and Marine Corps trial and appellate judges; and

(c) AJAG (Civil Law), in all other cases.

§ 776.10 Informal ethics advice.

(a) *Advisors.* Covered attorneys may seek informal ethics advice either from the officers named below or from supervisory attorneys in the field. Within the Office of the Judge Advocate General (OJAG) and the Office of the SJA to CMC, the following officials are designated to respond, either orally or in writing, to informal inquiries concerning this rule in the areas of practice indicated:

(1) Director, Criminal Law Division (OJAG Code 20): Military justice matters;

(2) Director, Trial Counsel Assistance Program (TCAP): Trial counsel matters;

(3) Director, Defense Counsel Assistance Program (DCAP): Defense counsel matters;

(4) Director, Legal Assistance Division (OJAG Code 16): Legal assistance matters;

(5) The DSJA to CMC and Head, Research and Civil Law Branch (JAR), Judge Advocate (JA) Division, Headquarters United States Marine Corps (HQMC): Cases involving Marine Corps judge advocates, or civil service and contracted civilian attorneys who per-

form legal services under the cognizance and supervision of SJA to CMC;

(6) Deputy Chief Judge, Navy-Marine Corps Trial Judiciary: Judicial matters; and

(7) Professional Responsibility Coordinator, Administrative Law Division (OJAG Code 13): All other matters.

(b) *Limitation.* Informal ethics advice will not normally be provided by JAG/HQMC advisors concerning professional responsibility matters that are then the subject of litigation.

(c) *Written advice.* A request for informal advice does not relieve the requester of the obligation to comply with subpart B of this part. Although covered attorneys are encouraged to seek advice when in doubt as to their responsibilities, they remain personally accountable for their professional conduct. If, however, an attorney receives written advice on an ethical matter after full disclosure of all relevant facts and reasonably relies on such advice, no adverse action under this part will be taken against the attorney. Written advice may be sought from either a supervisory attorney or the appropriate advisor in paragraph (a) of this section. The JAG is not bound by unwritten advice or by advice provided by personnel who are not supervisory attorneys or advisors. See §§ 776.8(b)(3) and 776.54(c) of this part.

§ 776.11 Outside practice of law.

A covered USG attorney’s primary professional responsibility is to the client, as defined by § 776.4 of this part, and he or she is expected to ensure that representation of such client is free from conflicts of interest and otherwise conforms to the requirements of Subpart B of this part and other regulations concerning the provision of legal services within the DoN. The outside practice of law, therefore, must be carefully monitored. Covered USG attorneys who wish to engage in the outside practice of law, including while on terminal leave, must first obtain permission from the JAG. Failure to obtain permission before engaging in the outside practice of law may subject the covered USG attorney to administrative or disciplinary action, including professional sanctions administered

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per subpart C of this part. Further details are contained in § 776.57 and subpart D of this part.

§ 776.12 Maintenance of files.

Pursuant to SECNAVINST 5211.5 (series) and SECNAVINST 5212.5 (series) ethics complaint records and outside practice of law request files shall be maintained by the Office of the Chief Judge, DoN (Code 05) for judicial conduct matters; the Research and Civil Law Branch, JA Division, HQMC (JAR) for Marine matters; and the Office of the JAG, Administrative Law Division (Code 13) for all other matters.

(a) Requests for access to such records should be referred to the Office of the Chief Judge, Washington Navy Yard, 1254 Charles Morris Street SE., Suite 320 Washington, DC, 20374-5124; Deputy Assistant Judge Advocate General (Administrative Law), Office of the Judge Advocate General (Code 13), 1322 Patterson Avenue SE Suite 3000, Washington Navy Yard, DC, 20374-5066; or to Head, Research and Civil Law Branch, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 3000 Marine Corps Pentagon (Room 4D556), Washington DC, 20350-3000, as appropriate.

(b) Local command files regarding professional responsibility complaints will not be maintained. Commanding officers and other supervisory attorneys may, however, maintain personal files but must not share their contents with others.

(c) All records maintained under this part shall be maintained in accordance with the following procedures established by JAGINST 5801.2 (series) and DON Privacy Act Notice N05813-1:

(1) Records shall be maintained for a minimum of two years;

(2) Records shall be maintained for as long as an attorney remains subject to JAG-imposed limitations on practice; and

(3) Records pertaining to unsubstantiated complaints, or to attorneys who are no longer subject to limitation on practice, shall be destroyed after 10 years.

§§ 776.13–776.17 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Rules of Professional Conduct

§ 776.18 Preamble.

(a) A covered attorney is a representative of clients, an officer of the legal system, an officer of the Federal Government, and a public citizen who has a special responsibility for the quality of justice and legal services provided to the DoN and to individual clients. These Rules of Professional Conduct (Subpart B of this part) govern the ethical conduct of covered attorneys practicing under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the MCM, 10 U.S.C. 1044 (Legal Assistance), other laws of the United States, and regulations of the DoN.

(b) Subpart B of this part not only address the professional conduct of judge advocates, but also apply to all other covered attorneys who practice under the cognizance and supervision of the Navy JAG.

(c) All covered attorneys are subject to professional disciplinary action, as outlined in this part, for violation of subpart B of this part. Action on allegations of professional or personal misconduct undertaken per subpart B of this part does not prevent other Federal, state, or local bar associations, or other licensing authorities, from taking professional disciplinary or other administrative action for the same or similar conduct.

§ 776.19 Principles.

Subpart B of this part is based on the following principles. Interpretation of subpart B of this part should flow from their common meaning. To the extent that any ambiguity or conflict exists, subpart B of this part should be interpreted consistent with these general principles.

(a) Covered attorneys shall:

(1) Obey the law and applicable military regulations, and counsel clients to do so.

(2) Follow all applicable ethics rules.

(3) Protect the legal rights and interests of clients, organizational and individual.

(4) Be honest and truthful in all dealings.